

OFFICE OF DAKOTA COUNTY ATTORNEY  
**JAMES C. BACKSTROM**  
COUNTY ATTORNEY



Dakota County Judicial Center  
1560 Highway 55  
Hastings, Minnesota 55033-2392  
Phillip D. Prokopowicz, Chief Deputy  
Karen A. Schaffer, First Assistant  
Monica Jensen, Community Relations Director

Telephone  
(651) 438-4438  
FAX: (651) 438-4479 (Civil Division)  
FAX: (651) 438-4500 (Criminal Division)  
FAX: (651) 438-4499 (Juvenile/Admin Division)  
E-mail: attorney@co.dakota.mn.us

May 19, 2008

**NEWS RELEASE**

**ROSEMOUNT JUVENILE PLEADS GUILTY AND IS SENTENCED IN DEATH OF 16-YEAR-OLD**

Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom announced that today Dakota Cheyenne Butler, age 16 of Rosemount, pleaded guilty to Murder in the Second Degree (unintentional murder while committing a felony) under Minnesota's extended juvenile jurisdiction law and was placed in the Red Wing Juvenile Correctional Facility until he is 21 years old. Butler also received a 150 month stayed adult prison term which could be executed should he not follow all of the requirements imposed by juvenile court Judge Michael Mayer. Butler was also ordered to pay restitution and write a letter of apology. The court will review Butler's juvenile disposition periodically, beginning in six months. This case involved the March 13<sup>th</sup> stabbing death of 17 year old Cody D. Casey in Rosemount.

Shortly after 3 p.m. on March 13, 2008, a Rosemount police officer was flagged down by a person and informed that a boy had been in a fight and had collapsed and fallen off of his bike as he was leaving the scene of the incident. The officer immediately rendered first aid to the fallen boy, later identified as Cody D. Casey, age 17, and called for an ambulance. Casey was transported to Regions Hospital where he was later declared dead as a result of apparent knife wounds. Three eyewitnesses told police that they had observed two males fighting in the driveway and a third male trying to break up the fight. One of the witnesses saw the individual later identified as Casey get on his bicycle after the fight and ride east on Dodd Boulevard on the south sidewalk. The witness said that Casey was riding his bike in a wobbly manner and came to a stop, telling one of the witnesses that he needed some help. Casey then fell off his bike to the ground. One witness ran to a nearby fire station to get help and another witness flagged down the police car passing by.

One of the witnesses told police that he had observed the other two persons involved in the fight go back into the house from the driveway where the incident took place. Officers spoke with the homeowner who was determined to be the stepfather of the other two persons who had been involved in the driveway incident. The homeowner assisted police in making contact with his stepsons, Zachary Butler-Martinez and Dakota Butler. Dakota Butler told his stepfather that he had been in a fight and stabbed someone. Police then questioned both Dakota Butler and Zachary Butler-Martinez. Both confirmed that Cody Casey had shown up at the residence looking for another brother of these boys. Casey was apparently told that the other brother was not there and was told to leave, but he refused. Dakota Butler then went into the house and came back out with a knife and again asked the Casey to leave. At that point, Casey apparently took out a sock with a rock in it and struck Dakota Butler in the head and then a fight ensued. During the fight, Dakota Butler stabbed Casey multiple times. Butler-Martinez then jumped in and stopped the fight indicating that he had to pull his brother off of Casey because his brother was angry.

Backstrom stated: "This was a senseless killing that could easily have been avoided. Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Cody Casey."

Zachary Albert Butler-Martinez, age 18, was charged\* with one count of Aiding an Offender and will have his next court appearance on June 9<sup>th</sup>.

If you have questions, contact James Backstrom at 651-438-4440.

\*Criminal charges are not evidence of guilt. A defendant/suspect is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.